

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the objections and rejections set forth in the Office Action of August 11, 2006 is respectfully requested.

The Examiner objected to the original drawings due to various informalities. In particular, several reference numbers mentioned in the specification were not included in any of the figures. In order to address this objection, new formal Figures 5a, 6b, and 7a-7d have been prepared and submitted herewith. In particular, these new formal figures have been amended so as to include the reference numbers identified by the Examiner, but no other changes have been made. In order to clearly indicate the changes that have been made to the original drawings, a Letter Regarding Proposed Drawing Amendments, including marked-up versions of Figures 5a, 6b, and 7a-7d, has been prepared and submitted herewith. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's objections to the drawings have been overcome.

The Examiner also objected to the specification due to an informality. In particular, the Examiner asserted that one of the reference numbers listed in the specification appears to be incorrect. In view of this objection, the specification has now been amended as indicated above in order to clarify the reference numbers. However, no new matter has been added. Therefore, the Examiner is requested to enter the amendments to the specification. In view of these amendments, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's objection to the specification has been overcome.

The Examiner rejected claims 13 and 15-25, including independent claims 13 and 24, as being anticipated by the Berding reference (US 5,936,803); and rejected claim 26 as being unpatentable over the Berding reference. However, on page 7 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that dependent claim 14 contained allowable subject matter. As a result, the claims have now been amended as indicated above. For the reasons discussed below, it is respectfully submitted that the amended claims are now clearly patentable over the prior art of record.

Both independent claim 13 and independent claim 24 have now been amended so as to incorporate the subject matter of allowable dependent claim 14, and claim 14 has been cancelled.

Therefore, in view of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claims 13 and 24, and the claims that depend therefrom, are now in condition for allowance.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner should have any comments or suggestions to help speed the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

Hideyuki HASHI et al.

By: 

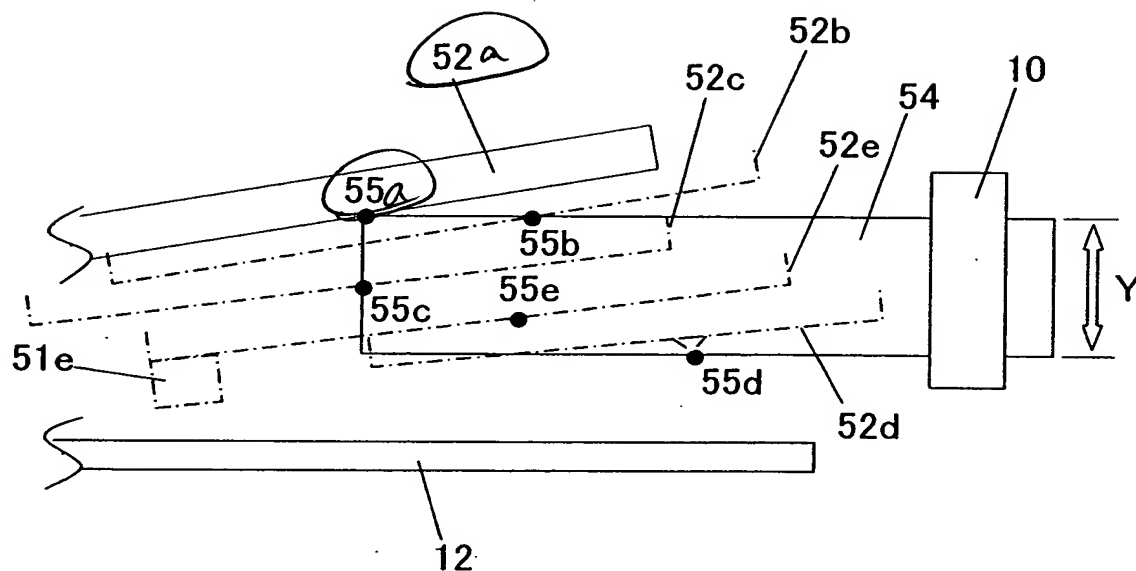
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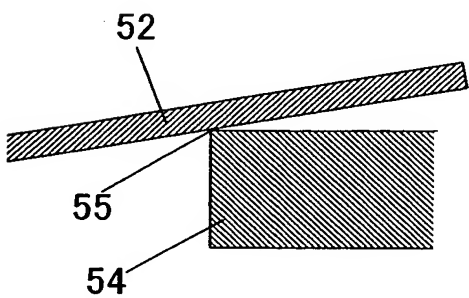
AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Replacement formal Figures 5a, 6b, 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d are submitted concurrently herewith under a separate cover letter.

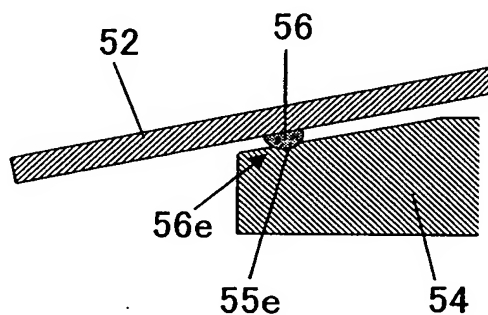
Fig. 5



(a)



(b)



(c)

Fig. 6

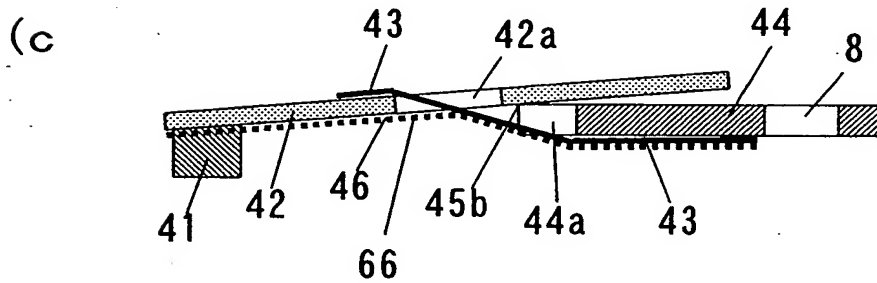
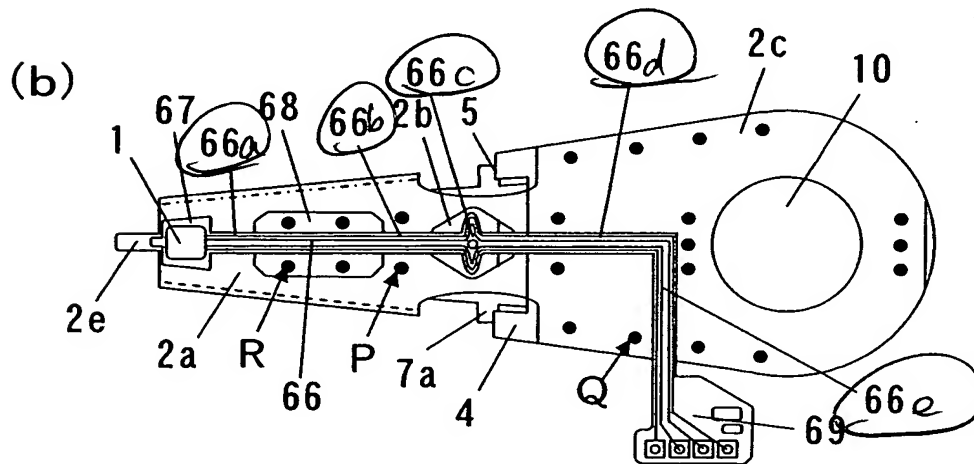
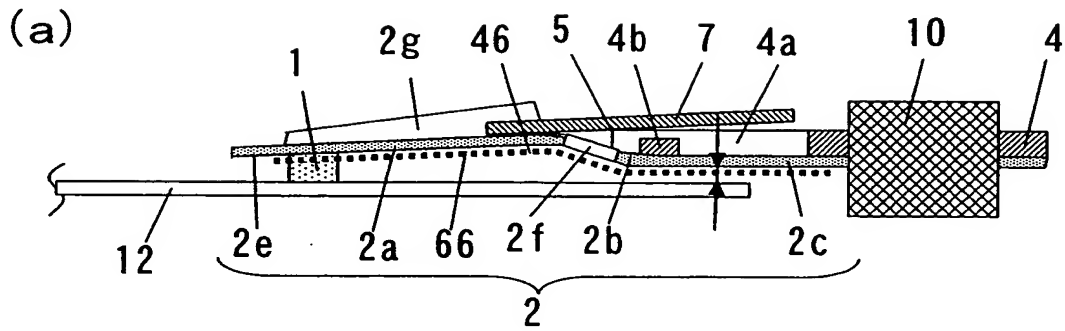


Fig. 7

